
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

City and County of San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2023 5:00 PM

ROSTER OF COMMISSIONERS

Karen Clopton, Chairperson
Joseph Sweiss, Vice-Chairperson
Vanessa R. Aquino, Commissioner
Mark Kelleher, Commissioner
Jason Pellegrini, Commissioner
Leah Pimentel, Commissioner
Irene Yee Riley, Commissioner
Ann Champion Shaw, Commissioner
Michael Sweet, Commissioner

Sheryl Evans Davis, EdD
Executive Director

For more information, contact the Commission Secretary at 415-252-2500
Agenda and other information are available on the HRC website: www.sfgov.org/sfhumanrights

Meeting was called to order at 5:14pm.

Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement – **Michael Sweet.**

1. 0:06 CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

Present: Karen Clopton, Irene Yee Riley, Ann Champion Shaw, Jayson Johnson, Michael Sweet, Vanessa R. Aquino, Leah Pimentel (Remote)

Absent: Mark Kelleher, Joseph Sweiss, Jason Pellegrini

Meeting was called to order with 6 Commissioners present (Leah Pimentel joined at 5:55).

Chair Clopton introduced new Commissioner Jayson Johnson and cited his history of active service.

2. 5:31 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (*Discussion Item*)

Members of the public may address the Commission on matters that are within the Commission’s jurisdiction and are not on today’s agenda.

There was no public comment on this item.

3. 6:31 ADOPTION OF THE JANUARY 26, 2023 MEETING MINUTES (*Discussion and Possible Action Item*)

Review and anticipated adoption of minutes from the Commission’s January 26, 2023 meeting.

Public Comment

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion to adopt January 26, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted: 1st Commissioner Sweet, 2nd Vice Chair Shaw. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Chair Clopton made opening remarks citing Black History month and its history on the world stage. “I would like to acknowledge Black History Month. Black History Month is observed in February. In Canada and in the United States. It's observed in October in Europe, in the in the in Ireland, the Netherlands and UK. It started as Negro History Week in 1926 by Carter G

Woodson... In the Human Rights Commission, we are part of a global movement that began almost 75 years ago with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

4. 15:44 SAN FRANCISCO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FRAMEWORK & GENERAL PLAN INTRODUCTION (*Discussion Item*)

Update on work by The San Francisco Planning Department that is seeking to amend the San Francisco General Plan by adopting a new Environmental Justice Framework and updating the General Plan Introduction. The new EJ Framework would fulfill the City’s obligations under Senate Bill 1000

Presentation: Lisa Chen, Principal Planner, San Francisco Planning Department
Danielle Ngo, Senior Planner, San Francisco Planning Department
Public Comment

Lisa Chen and Danielle Ngo presented on the Environmental Justice framework being introduced to the City’s General Plan. This new policy will “comprise San Francisco’s first citywide policy aimed at addressing environmental justice across all city agencies.”

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on this item.

Commissioner Aquino: Asked presenters about the map shown: “You mentioned that you’re focusing on this Soma district, the Bayview 10, Bayview Hunters Point as well as the Tenderloin districts. Is that where you start? Or is that where you’ll begin to address some of those environmental issues? And then are you going to tap into other neighborhoods and communities?... districts out such as the Ingleside area, the Excelsior area, the mission districts, some of those areas really need attention, just as well as the Bayview the soma in the Tenderloin as well.”

Lisa Chen: “All those neighborhoods combined with our methodology are identified as the top 30% OF ENVIRONMENTAL burden in the city. And so our framework applies to all of those neighborhoods.”

Vice Chair Shaw: Thanked presenters. Asked about public access for the EJ Framework. Asked what the Commission can do to help promote public access.

Lisa Chen: “We have a whole data team within our department who are really passionate about looking at data across our neighborhoods and making it more available and usable for everyone... we do also work closely with our colleagues at data SF, just to you know, ensure

that at a city scale, we're all thinking about how we make information about what we're doing as a city more available to everyone.”

Chair Clopton: Asked about City efforts to ensure clean-up of superfund site at Bayview Hunters Point

Lisa Chen: “Part of what we're trying to do with this project is really highlight issues like this and opportunity and, and also as government own up to them and acknowledge when harms have been done...this is a high-level document and it does not get into implementation.”

5. 37:50 THE FINANCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT, SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE OF THE TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR *(Discussion Item)*

Presentation on 3-month promotional effort starting in February by the Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector’s Financial Justice Project to make people aware of their work to lift financial burden from low income and persons experiencing homelessness through fine and fees discounts.

Presentation: Cecilia Perez, Financial Justice Project, Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector, City and County of San Francisco

Anne Stuhldreher, Director, Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector

Public Comment

Director Stuhldreher introduced the Department and the work being done by the Financial Justice Project in saving people money dealing with fines, fees; “to assess and reform fines and fees that we know have a disproportionate impact on people with low incomes and communities of color.... We've either eliminated or created ability to pay discounts for dozens of fines and fees.

Cecilia Perez provided overview of fine and fees discount; slide presentation available on HRC website and through the Tax and Treasury; Financial justice project website. “We can help people with their medical bills, help people with their water and sewer bills, and so on and so forth. Just to give you a little bit of an idea of how significant these discounts are, we have in general, two sets of discounts. We have one for people with low incomes, and we have one for people experiencing homelessness.”

Chair Clopton: “How do people know these services/discounts exist?”

Cecilia Perez: “Staff people (ie. At car return) are trained to let people know... We have a social media toolkit to get the word out, and we are making presentations such as this

one...Not a lot of people know about these discounts; that is why we are launching this 3-month awareness campaign.”

Commissioner Aquino: What do you have for people to help them learn of your discounts; people with language or technology barriers?

Director Stuhldreher: “We do we work, we do, like dozens of presentations every year. And then we sit at so many kind of different tables with community groups throughout the city, and just kind of do our best to make sure like, a lot of grassroots organizations have these materials... we're working with Street Sheet, we're working with SF Bayview times, we're working with El Tecolote Tei and we're trying to work with a lot of ethnic media. We can always do more and we are open to suggestions or recommendations you may have for us.”

Commissioner Pimentel: Asked a question about the discount, how are they processed? “If someone is trying to make a payment, is there a verification process to go through to get the discount? And they get reimbursed later? Or is it instant discount?”

Director Stuhldreher: “It is an instant discount... there's about 250,000 people in our city who are either receiving medical CalFresh, or Cal Works. And so for those folks, you can show your card, at the courts, or at the MTA. And that is that is enough to be eligible for these.

Commissioner Sweet: How id this handled budgetarily? Is someone in the city carrying this on books? Or are the fines just made to disappear?” Asked if the money (budget) could run out and someone be turned away as a result of this.

Cecilia Perez: Agencies have set aside money (in their budgets) for addressing these fee discounts.

Director Stuhldreher: No one has ever been turned away.

Commissioner Riley: “Would you be reaching out to the public housing, building managers and low-income housing, and building manager?”

Director Stuhldreher: We have done and a lot of our partners have done significant kind of outreach there. Everything from meetings, attending meetings in those buildings, making sure there's materials kind of up in in community rooms, etc.”

Chair Clopton: What happens to people who live in their cars and lose everything when the cars get towed?

Director Stuhldreher: Word of mouth in this community helps get the word out about our services... to get that discount, they need to be assessed by a community access point. And they can do that over the phone, or they can go in person, and then they're able to get their car back with everything in it. All the storage, any other fines, those are all removed."

Commissioner Johnson: "Are there coordinated efforts to make sure that the discounts that are available here in San Cisco are communicated in other communities...in case anyone moves to other communities and learns about a fine that they'd left behind here in San Francisco?"

Director Stuhldreher: Noted this is one of the reasons the awareness campaign is underway.

Chair Clopton: Noted failure to pay can be a criminal offence that can result In an arrest warrant; a criminalization of poverty.

Director Stuhldreher: "Having low income being in poverty should not be a crime. So we're trying to remove a lot of these barriers."

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on this item.

6. 1:07:26 COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY (*Discussion Item*)

Commissioners update the public on activities they have participated in and any upcoming events.

Public Comment

Commissioner Johnson:

Had the pleasure of attending here in City Hall on the epic game of Black History Month, the amazing picture taking with Mayor London breed in celebration of both Black History Month and Lunar New Year.

Commissioner Aquino:

Attended this morning's Mayor London breed State of the City address.

Commissioner Riley: Attended the mayor's Lunar New Year party in City Hall, and also attended the photo session after. Attended the Lunar New Year Parade on Saturday, and the Stand

Together SF Meeting on Wednesday. Coming up on February 15, will attend the celebration of Lunar New Year and the Black History Month celebration, it will be at the main library; five o'clock in the evening.

Chair Clopton: Attended State of the City address at Pier 70; very inspirational. Mayor closed out “Dreaming Forward” event today with the Dream Keepers Initiative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on this item.

7. 1:13:25 ADJOURNMENT Meeting adjourned at 5:59pm.

Motion to Adjourn: 1st Commissioner Riley, 2nd Commissioner Sweet

Transcription of the meeting minutes are available upon request to the Commission Secretary, john.mcknight@sfgov.org.